Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1316 (1997)[1]

State of emergency in Albania

Parliamentary Assembly

1. With the near-total breakdown of law and order in Albania, the Council of Europe is faced by a situation without precedent in a member state.

2. The crisis, following the troubled parliamentary elections of May/June 1996, was caused by the collapse of "pyramid" investment schemes, affecting directly or indirectly up to 80% of the people and causing a loss to the national economy of up to US$ 2 billion.

3. The Assembly notes the conclusions of its mission of inquiry (6-7 March 1997) into the state of emergency in Albania proclaimed on 2 March 1997. It welcomes the subsequent missions undertaken by the European Union and osce. It further welcomes the co-operation and agreement between these institutions, together with the Council of Europe, in framing a plan for Albania's recovery.

4. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers take an initiative to form a tripartite task force (Council of Europe, European Union, osce) to give immediate international support to the new coalition government:

4.1. for restoring order with due regard to Albania's continuing obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights, with action under the aegis of osce for recovery of weapons from civilians;

4.2. through urgent supplies of food and medicines and for restoration of water and electricity;

4.3. for restoring the authority of the regularly elected municipal institutions in order to enable them to perform their duties;

4.4. through an urgent expansion of job creation programmes;

4.5. through an imf stabilisation programme and support for the national budget;

4.6. through the preparation of an adequate legislative, regulatory and organisational infra-structure for parliamentary elections under the supervision of the Council of Europe and other European organisations, and with abolition or reform of the "genocide" and "verification" laws as required by Assembly Resolution 1114 (1997).

5. The Assembly further calls for

5.1. an independent inquiry into the scandal of the "pyramid" investment schemes, with international expertise, and immediate publication of the report in order to guarantee transparency and restore confidence, both nationally and internationally;

5.2. an inquiry by the international financial institutions into the management of Albania's public finances and budget for 1996-97, with publication of the report;

5.3. special attention by the governments concerned to establish arrangements for monitoring and preventing the traffic of arms and drugs and the movement of persons linked to organised crime;

1. See Doc. 7780, report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Van der Linden. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 19 March 1997.

5.4. concerted action by governments of member states in support of the Italian and Greek and other national authorities and non-governmental organisations in their humanitarian response to the flow of refugees;

5.5. a generous and urgent response to the appeals for funds launched by the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international agencies in aid of the vulnerable population groups.

6. The Assembly calls on the Secretary General to review and adjust Council of Europe programmes, with a view to making a significant contribution to the multi-institutional assistance teams for Albania proposed by OSCE;

7. The Assembly requests the leaders of its political groups (or their representatives), with the rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee, to make further visits to Albania in support of the reconciliation process between Albania's political parties